(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to intervene with a view to protect the domestic producers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL): (a) to (d) Domestic manufacturers of Soda Ash are of the view that China is dumping Soda Ash into the Country. A separate procedure has been prescribed for dealing with such cases and evidence regarding dumping has to be adduced. The Soda Ash industry has been advised to file their application before the prescribed authority.

Retail Prices for Decontrolled Fertilizers

1097. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to lift its control on fixing maximum retail prices for decontrolled fertilizers; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL): (a) and (b) Fiscal sustainability and operational flexibility of the Special Concession Scheme on decontrolled fertilizers has to be ensured in the interest of continued availability of these fertilizers. However, a proposal for not indicating their maximum retail price is being examined by the government.

Modernisation of fertilizer companeis in Tamil Nadu

1098. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of fertilizer companies situated in Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether Government have any plan to modernise these companies;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICAL AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATAEL): (a) There are 5 major fertilizer plants in Tamil Nadu.

(b) to (d) Modernisation of fertilizer plants are undertaken by the promotors as and when required. Madras Fertilizers Limited has recently comissioned the expansion and rehabilitation of their existing plant.

Status of Assam Gas Cracker Project

1099. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state the present and latest status of Assam Gas Cracker Project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL): Assam Industrial Development Corporation (AIDC) proposed for setting up a Gas Cracker to utilise gas available from oil fields in the State of Assam. A Letter of Intent (LOI) was issued to AIDC on 25.1.1991 for setting up gas cracker and other downstream units. The Government of Assam identified Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) as co-promoter of the project and a company Reliance Assam Petrochemicals Ltd. (RAPL) was incorporated. The LOI was subsequently transferred to RAPL.

Considering the potential contribution a mega complex can make towards socio-economic development of the region and certain inherent disadvantages of putting up the gas cracker project in Assam as compared to other regions in the country the Union Cabinet in 1994 and subsequently in 1977 approved following incentives/concessions:

(i) Provision of Rs. 377 crores as one time capital subsidy.